

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7, 12-14, 17-19, 21 and 22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 4 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter because they are supported by at least the claims, as originally filed. Claims 21 and 22 are added. The added claims introduce no new matter because they are supported by at least Applicants' disclosure at page 4, lines 22-33 and page 13, lines 30-36 of Applicants' disclosure as originally filed. Claims 2, 9-11, 15, 16 and 20 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action, on page 2, rejects claims 1-7 and 9-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,021,048 to Taylor, III et al. (hereinafter "Taylor"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Taylor teaches a plasma generating assembly 42 that is physically separated from the nozzle of the fuel injector 38 (see, e.g., Fig. 2 of Taylor). In this regard, the plasma generator cannot be, for example, reasonably interpreted as being located on the distal end portion of said injecting nozzle.

Claim 1 recites, among other features, wherein said plasma generator is located on the distal end portion of said injecting nozzle. With reference to, for example, Figs. 3 and 4 of Applicants' disclosure, this feature is clearly shown. This feature defines a structural difference that clearly distinguishes the subject matter of the pending claims over Taylor.

For at least the above reason, Taylor cannot reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, the combination of all of the features positively recited in independent claim 1. Further, claims 3-7, 12-14 and 17-19 are also neither taught, nor would they have been suggested, by Taylor for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly or

indirectly on an allowable base claim, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

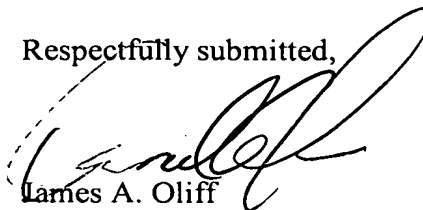
Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3-7, 12-14 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Taylor are respectfully requested.

Added claims 21 and 22 are also allowable for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly or indirectly on an allowable base claim, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites. For example, Taylor cannot reasonably be considered to teach a feature wherein the plasma is in a region within 5 cm from the injection port; or a feature wherein plasma is generated only at the moment of injecting the reducing agent under a condition that the system is not sufficiently warmed up, as is positively recited in the added claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-7, 12-14, 17-19, 21 and 22 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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